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west Passage, little will be done, we are confident, but to show the fallacy of the hopes of the late Sir John Barrow. The British navy may well be proud of the boldness, perseverance, and fortitude which have been displayed in the baffled search for this coy strait. Yet, after three centuries of exploration, the language used to urge its prosecution remains unchanged. In the year 1576, after Frobisher's return, Sir Humphrey Gilbert said, in his Discourse to prove a passage by the Northwest to Cathaia and the East Indies, "America is discovered so farre, towards the north, as Cape Fredo, which is at 62 degrees, and that part of Grondland next adjoyning is knownen to stand at but 72 degrees. So that we have but 10 degrees to saile north and south to put the world out of doubt hereof." In 1844, Sir John Barrow wrote, "Only nine hundred miles remain to be explored. If expense be the only objection, it may be met by observing that one season only would suffice for its decision." Sir Humphrey Gilbert perished in the fruitless expedition that his discourse excited; and the expedition which Sir John Barrow's argument elicited has been for four years — Heaven only knows where. Such long-continued want of success warrants us in doubting the existence of the Northwest Passage; until it shall be actually discovered, we may fairly hold it to be a phantom

"Which, like the circle bounding earth and skies,  
Still lures us on, and, as we follow, flies."

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ART. II. — *Histoire de la Sicile sous la Domination des Normands.* Par le BARON DE BAZANCOURT. Paris: 1846. 2 vols. 8vo.

IN the year 1016, a bark proceeding from Amalfi was seen to enter the port of Salerno. The pilgrim cloaks of those who manned it, the long beards which descended on their breasts, and the purses which were fastened to their girdles, showed that they had just returned from the Holy Land. Many were the pilgrims who at that period resorted to Palestine to obtain, at the tomb of the Saviour, the forgiveness of their sins. The minds of men were then filled

with dark forebodings. It was thought, that a thousand years having elapsed since the birth of Christ, the destruction of the world was nigh at hand. This belief, founded on a false interpretation of certain passages in Scripture, was confirmed by some unusual phenomena in the physical world. The earth had trembled; in the heavens had been seen streaks of fire, in which was traced the form of the Evil Spirit, who seemed to approach the earth and threaten it with destruction; a comet, also, had appeared, and increased the terror of the superstitious. Many enriched monasteries and churches with their worldly goods, and, casting aside their warlike attire, took up the pilgrim's staff and proceeded to Palestine.

No nation showed more zeal in undertaking these distant journeys than the Normans. But recently converted to Christianity, they had all the zeal of neophytes. It was a party of these Normans who now landed at Salerno. It was not unusual for them to stop in Italy, on their homeward passage; for they preferred a journey across Italy and France, where they might meet with hazardous adventures, to a monotonous voyage in the Mediterranean. There was something in the noble and manly bearing of the knights, who then approached Salerno, which prepossessed in their favor Gaymar, who then reigned there. He received them hospitably, and endeavored by his kind treatment to make them forget the perils and the dangers which they had sustained. The Normans wished to requite the hospitality of Gaymar, and an unexpected event afforded them the means of showing their gratitude.

They had not been long at the court of Salerno, when a Saracen fleet approached the city to claim the annual tribute which the Saracens, who then ruled the island of Sicily, exacted of Gaymar, and which he had failed that year to pay. Believing himself unable to resist so powerful an enemy, the prince was on the point of ordering payment to be made, when Drogon, the leader of the Normans, presented himself before him, and exclaimed: — “ Noble Lord, do the inhabitants of Salerno mean to submit, like defenceless widows, and suffer such an insult from the Mussulmans? Shall Christians be subjected to Infidels? No! let the hopes of these Barbarians be deceived. Give us arms and horses, and their

insolence shall soon be punished." The Saracens were encamped in a field, near the city, where they passed the time in riot and debauchery. Drogon and his followers secretly armed themselves, and, accompanied by the best warriors of Salerno, attacked the Saracen camp at dead of night. The Infidels, taken by surprise, were easily vanquished, and but few were left to carry to their companions in the boats the intelligence of their disaster. The Normans returned in triumph to Salerno, where Gaymar offered them magnificent presents; but they declined receiving them, saying that they could not accept money for what they had done for the sake of God alone. Gaymar then entreated them to remain at his court. To this they replied, that after so long an absence from their native country they were desirous of revisiting it; but they would send to him some of their countrymen as valiant as themselves, "which," added they, with true Norman pride, "would not be difficult." With this promise they departed.

They were faithful to their word. The sight of the rich fruits, the oranges and dates, which Drogon and his followers had brought, and the glowing description they gave of those southern regions where grew the olive, the laurel, and the vine, induced other knights to leave their home and seek adventures in Italy. They distinguished themselves there by many acts of valor and hardihood. Among them were three young men, sons of Tancred, Lord of Hauteville, a poor but illustrious nobleman. Tancred had been twice married, and had twelve children, who were alike remarkable for strength of body and high traits of character. It seemed, says one of the historians of Sicily, as if fortune had collected from the different parts of the world those whom it thought most worthy of command. Serlon, the eldest, for some important services rendered to Robert, Duke of Normandy, had been retained at the court of that prince, where he became a great favorite. The younger sons could not bear to see their brother thus raised above them; and three of them, William, Onfroy, and Drogon, seeing that Normandy offered no field for their ambition, determined to go to Italy, where many of their countrymen had already preceded them.

It is difficult for us to imagine with what hardships and dangers a journey of such length was attended. With the

exception of a few Roman roads, which had been repaired by Queen Brunehaut, there was not a practicable road in France. The traveller was obliged to pass through ploughed fields, to traverse forests infested with robbers, spending the night at some humble cottage or hospitable monastery, or else to have recourse to his own good sword. Such were the dangers which the sons of Tancred encountered, in order to reach the country which was to be the field of so many of the brilliant exploits of their countrymen.

They proceeded to the court of Salerno, where Gaymar IV., the son of the prince who had received Drogon and his companions, then reigned. He received them with much kindness, admitted them to his counsels, and entrusted them with several important undertakings. He soon discovered, however, that the growing power and influence of his guests might prove dangerous to his own authority; and it was not without a secret satisfaction that, in 1038, he received a messenger from Michael the Paphlagonian, then emperor of the East, requesting that the Normans might join him in his proposed expedition against Sicily. Gaymar did not fail to represent to the sons of Tancred all the advantages they might derive from the offer of Michael; and the Normans, though quick to perceive the real cause of the interest which their host took in their departure, collected those of their countrymen who were willing to follow them, and proceeded to Reggio, where Maniakis, the Greek general, awaited them. The Normans, numbering three hundred men, each with his retinue, were commanded by William surnamed *Bras de Fer*. They were received with every mark of respect by Maniakis, who, at the sight of these renowned warriors, clad in their heavy armor, was inspired with confident hopes of success.

Sicily, against which the combined forces of Maniakis and William of the Iron Arm were to proceed, had then been in possession of the Saracens for upwards of two hundred years. Immediately after the death of Mahomet, his followers had commenced the work of conquest which was prescribed to them in the Koran. Obedient to the voice of their law-giver, who told them, "to make war on those who believe neither in Allah nor in the day of Judgment, who do not proscribe what he and his prophet have forbidden, and do not

accept the true religion from those to whom the sacred books have been entrusted, — to make war on these unbelievers until they should come to pay tribute and be humbled,” — they had carried their victorious arms into Persia, Syria, and Egypt, and had invaded Sicily as early as the year 647. This first attempt at conquest proved vain, and it was not until after nearly two hundred years of fruitless endeavors, that they succeeded in wresting that beautiful island from the emperors of the East. In 827, the treachery of Euphemius, who then held the command in Sicily in the name of the emperor, enabled them to form a permanent settlement in the island. Euphemius had been appointed to his important station by Michael the Stammerer, who then reigned at Constantinople. Although born of a noble Grecian family, Euphemius was a man of vulgar habits, and had it not been for his military talents, he would not probably have received so important an office. He had become enamoured of a young girl named Omoniza, and had demanded her hand from her parents. His demand had been granted, but he afterwards learned that he was not the only suitor favorably received. Enraged at what he considered as the grossest insult, he went by night to the convent where the young girl resided, and carried her off. Great was the consternation when, on the following morning, Omoniza’s cell was found empty. Her brothers swore to be avenged. “We shall obtain justice,” said one of them to the other, “if God is God, and if from heaven he sees the deeds which are done on earth.” Animated by this feeling, they repaired to Constantinople, there to demand satisfaction from the emperor. Michael heard their complaint with favor, and ordered that Euphemius should be arrested, that his nose should be cut off, and he should be led thus mutilated through the streets of Syracuse as an example and a warning.

Euphemius did not wait for this cruel sentence to be executed. He left Sicily with all whom he could prevail upon to follow him, and sought a refuge in Africa, where the description which he gave of the island, and the brilliant promises which he made the Saracens, induced them to rally around him. They landed at Mazara with an army of seven hundred horse and ten thousand foot. Euphemius soon found that he had opened the country to a mighty foe, who, in the

hour of triumph, would forget him by whom their success had been obtained. He was on the point of betraying his new friends, as he had his former master, when he was himself assassinated by one of his followers.

The Saracens did not find the work of conquest an easy one, and nearly fifty years elapsed before Sicily was entirely subjected to their sway. From that time until the eleventh century, they had remained in tranquil possession of the island. Not so much to their own power or valor was the ease with which they had retained this dominion to be ascribed, as to the distracted condition of the Eastern empire, and to the weakness and vices of those who wielded the sceptre at Constantinople. The Saracens were no longer that noble and courageous people, who, impelled by the enthusiasm of their faith, had marched forth to subdue the world. Internal dissensions had weakened them, and the fatal tendency of their religion to destroy all activity of mind, and to leave the believer in passive expectation of the events which were to come, had rendered them incapable of resisting the warlike people who had come from the northern regions of Europe to form a permanent settlement on the banks of the Seine, and who were soon afterwards to give a conqueror to Britain.

From Reggio the imperial army, commanded by Maniakis and William of Hauteville, set sail for Sicily. As they approached the island, they saw its shores covered with every species of fruit tree, the vineyards spread on the sides of the hills, and the thousand refreshing streams which fertilized the land. The religious feelings of the Normans were shocked when they reflected that this beautiful island was in the hands of the Infidels. The fleet advanced towards Messina. For two hundred years this city had been ruled by the Mussulmans, and yet from the summit of its formidable battlements waved a banner bearing on it the Holy Cross. The conquered inhabitants had been permitted by their victors to retain this emblem of their past glory and future hopes; and as the Christian army approached, it seemed to call on them to deliver their brethren from bondage. At first, the Moorish garrison opposed a vigorous resistance to the invaders; but unaccustomed to such enemies as the Normans, they soon gave way, and the city opened its gates to Maniakis and his

followers. The imperial army then invaded the whole island as far as Syracuse, which also surrendered. After the capture of this city, the Normans, separating from the main body of the army, continued to pursue the enemy, while the Greeks took possession of all the rich booty, leaving nothing for their chivalrous allies. Indignant at this treacherous conduct, the Normans sent Ardouin, a Lombard, and a relative of Ambrosius, archbishop of Milan, to the Greek commander, to set forth their causes of complaint, and demand a reparation for the injuries they had received. Whether he began to fear the ascendancy which the Normans were gaining in the army, or was angry that Ardouin addressed him in language too bold and haughty, Maniakis ordered the messenger to be seized and whipped in presence of the whole camp, after which, with his own hand, he plucked out his beard. In this sad condition, covered with blood and stripped of his clothes, Ardouin returned to the Norman camp. At the sight of their ambassador thus cruelly and ignominiously treated, the Normans raised a cry of indignation, and swore to avenge immediately the insult which had been offered. "Stop!" exclaimed Ardouin, "leave these perfidious and ungrateful Greeks in peace. If deferred, the punishment which awaits them will be none the less certain. Apulia is open to us. There we shall find booty enough to make us forget that which we have now lost." His associates approved this advice, and Ardouin, a few days afterwards, dissimulating his resentment, betook himself to the Greek camp, and demanded of the general a safe-conduct to enable him and some of his companions to return to the peninsula. This was granted, and on the ensuing night the Normans left their camp, hastened to Messina, and crossing the straits before the Greeks could overtake them, commenced ravaging those parts of Calabria which acknowledged the sway of Constantinople. Nor did they spare the dominions of Gaymar, their former host; for to him, as he had advised them to join the army of Maniakis, they attributed the treachery which had been practised upon them.

On hearing of the achievements of the Normans in Italy, Maniakis left Sicily and endeavored to check their progress. His attempt might have been successful, had he not, owing to some accusation preferred against him, been recalled to Con-



stantinople, where he was thrown into prison. Whilst he was thus confined, the feeble commander sent to Sicily in his place allowed the island again to pass into the hands of the Infidels, and southern Italy continued to be ravaged by the Normans. The Emperor saw that none but Maniakis could expel the foreigners from Italy, and therefore opened the gates of his prison, restored to him his titles and honors, and invested him once more with the chief command. As soon as he arrived in Calabria, the victorious march of the Normans was arrested; but the Emperor, again listening to the voice of his counsellors, recalled Maniakis once more. This time, however, the general refused to obey, and raised the standard of rebellion. An army was sent against him, and he was killed in battle. The death of Maniakis was a most fortunate event for the ambitious plans of the Normans. They soon succeeded in conquering Apulia, of which William, by the common consent of his companions, was named Count.

William survived but three years his elevation to power, and his brother Drogon succeeded him. About this time, another band of Normans arrived in Italy. At their head was a young man, about twenty-five years old, of tall stature and great beauty of person. This was another of the sons of Tancred of Hauteville, — Robert, surnamed Guiscard, who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the history of the Norman conquests in the south of Europe. Meanwhile, Drogon had done homage to the Emperor of Germany, and received the title of Duke instead of Count. In 1051, he was assassinated in the Church of San Lorenzo, at Montagliaro, and this crime gave the signal for a general outbreak in Apulia. Onfroy, who had taken the reins of government, succeeded in quelling this revolt; but hardly had he succeeded, when he was called to encounter a far greater peril.

Leo IX. was then on the papal throne. He saw with alarm the growing discontent of the population governed by the Normans, who since they had acquired a firm footing in the country, had begun to make the people feel their iron yoke. Castles, lands, and houses were taken by violence from their legitimate owners. Churches were pillaged, and women were torn away from their husbands. Leo feared that a power which had grown so rapidly might increase still

more, and threaten his own authority with ruin. He therefore determined to favor the Greeks in the reëstablishment of their dominion in Southern Italy, hoping that they might expel the foreigners. For this purpose, he repaired to Germany, where he entered into a treaty with the Emperor, who, unmindful of the investiture which he had granted to the Normans, consented to aid the Pope in fighting against them. Leo himself headed the army, composed of those Germans whom he had succeeded in enlisting; of adventurers, collected from every part of Italy; and of quite a large body of Greeks. The Normans had only about three thousand men to oppose to this army, but they were the stoutest warriors in Europe. After vain endeavors to induce the Pope to give up his undertaking, they met the papal army at Civitella, on the 18th of June, 1053, and gained a decisive victory. The Pope sought refuge in the city of Civitella, but the inhabitants were obliged to yield him up to the enemy. As soon as the Holy Father had surrendered, the Normans saw in him only the Spiritual Head of the Church, and treated him with every mark of respect and veneration. He resided for some time in the city of Benevento, where the kindness of his enemies so touched him, that he not only confirmed the investiture which had already been granted, but assured to them the possession of all the territory which they might conquer in Calabria. Thus passed away the danger which had menaced their dominion.

In 1056, Onfroy died, and Robert Guiscard succeeded him as Duke of Apulia. Pope Nicholas II. himself came to perform the ceremony of investiture, and added a grant of Sicily, although the Normans did not then possess an inch of ground in that island. The historians of the time have given a detailed account of this ceremony. After an invocation to the Holy Trinity, the Pope rose, and addressed the Duke: — “Robert Guiscard, son of Tancred, most Christian prince, in virtue of the sovereign power which God has transmitted to me for the greater splendor and glory of religion on earth, I give to thee, and to thy descendants, the investiture of the Duchies of Apulia and Calabria, so that thou mayest cause the religion of Christ to flourish and shine with a pure radiancy. Most Christian prince, I add to this investiture that of the Duchy of Sicily; strong by thy faith in God, thou

wilt carry thy victorious arms into that island, and purge it of the Infidels who have too long profaned it by their presence. Be with God, and he will be with thee." The Duke then took the oaths prescribed, and received the ducal coronet and the consecrated standard, the symbol of investiture.

Encouraged by this ceremony, the Normans had now no other thought than that of rescuing Sicily from the hands of the Saracens. Robert Guiscard, however, did not play the most important part in this conquest. In 1057, he had summoned from Normandy his brother Roger, the youngest son of the Lord of Hauteville. This youth had grown up in the hope of one day joining Robert in Italy, and adding by his own exploits new glory to a family already distinguished. From the historian Malaterra, we learn that this young man was not more than twenty-two years of age when he arrived at the court of his brother; that he was of noble stature, fine proportions, and graceful bearing; full of strength and courage, and of a buoyant and elastic spirit, yet withal, prudent and sagacious. Notwithstanding his youth, Roger was appointed Captain-General by his brother as soon as he reached Italy. In an expedition against the Calabrians, who had attempted to free themselves from the Norman dominion, he acquired considerable renown and succeeded in making himself beloved by the army. At first, his success only excited the admiration of Robert Guiscard; but that jealous prince soon began to view him as a rival. He reduced his pay, and Roger in his resentment retired to Apulia, where one of his brothers offered him an asylum. He did not remain long there, but roving about through the country, he maintained himself by plunder. Peace was finally made between the brothers when Robert Guiscard wished again to subdue the Calabrians, who once more had revolted against his authority; and after a successful campaign against the insurgents, the two brothers retired to Reggio.

It was while at this place, during the winter of 1061, that a man, who from his dress and language might easily be recognized as a Saracen, presented himself at the palace of Count Roger and demanded an interview. This man was Ebn-el-Themnah, one of the powerful emirs of Sicily, who, after the death of Alsamsam, a prince who had united the whole island under his sway, had divided this rich country

among themselves. He had married a woman whose husband he had slain, and in a fit of drunkenness he had attempted to open her veins. Her brother, Aly Benaam, indignant at this outrage, had marched against him and defeated him. Ebn-el-Themnah was obliged to quit the island, but with the intention of returning and obtaining his revenge. He had now come to offer his services to the Normans. Admitted to the presence of Roger, he began by praising the valor of the Normans, and then said that the Christians had a right to Sicily, and that it would be easy for them to conquer it, because the cities and fortresses were wanting in ammunition and provisions, and his countrymen were inexperienced in the art of war. He explained to Roger the causes of grievance which he had against the Emir Benaam, and represented that the Saracens lived in such entire security that it would not be difficult to subdue them. "Sicily is, moreover, filled with Christians," continued the artful Arab, as he saw the growing interest which Roger took in his narrative; "at the sight of your victorious arms, they will hasten to rally around you. My services and those of my partisans you may rely upon, on the sole condition that I shall retain my possessions." Seductive as was the language of El-Themnah, the Count still hesitated. The Saracen then pulled from under his garment the Koran, and took an oath upon it that every word he had spoken was true. The expression of his face and the energy of his language added new force to his oath, and Roger, no longer able to doubt his sincerity, promised him the aid of his army.

Robert Guiscard, on hearing of the interview between his brother and El-Themnah, and of the engagement between them, was filled with concern, and warned Roger against what he considered as a snare laid for him by the Infidels. But another incident occurred about this time, which served to confirm Roger in his resolution. Three citizens of Messina, Ansoldo di Pacti, Nicolao Camoli, and Giacopo di Saccano, came to the Norman Count to complain of the oppression exercised in that city by the Saracens, and to entreat him to rescue their fellow-citizens from this despotic rule. They found Roger at Melito, where he had retired to entertain Pope Nicholas II. Giacopo, the most eloquent of the three messengers, addressed him thus: — "Invincible war-

rior, we are sent to thee by the city of Messina, which is full of confidence in thy faith and thy courage. Messina entreats thee to afford her thy assistance. It is well known that this unhappy city, as well as the rest of Sicily, is in the hands of the Infidels, and for two hundred and thirty years the religion of Christ has languished under the yoke of the impious Saracens, whose criminal power has heaped upon us so much misery and such heavy sorrows. Come to our assistance, help us with thy sword. Messina calls upon thee ; Messina has chosen thee to be the saviour of her liberties ; Messina wishes to live under thy sway, so that thy victory may proclaim the triumph of our faith. Messina awaits thy arrival ; all the Christians in the island await thee, for under thy guidance they will shake off the yoke of the barbarians and deliver Sicily. Come to us, so that the religion of Christ, for a time humbled and profaned by the Infidels, may spring up again under thy victorious arm."

"Be welcome," replied the Count ; "if these things come from God, God will be with us, and we shall be able to expel these enemies of the Christian faith from Sicily." With these few words, he took his leave of the ambassadors, and going immediately to the Pope's apartment, gave him a full account of what had passed, and asked for his blessing. "Count Roger," said the Pope, "it is a noble thought to wish to expel this impious sect from Sicily, and to deliver that island from a yoke which it has borne for so many years. May the all-powerful and merciful God be with thee, and with the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, mayest thou go in confidence. I ask of thee but one thing ; when, victorious over thy enemies, thou shalt have subdued the island, show thyself, whatever may be thy power, obedient to God. Of the spoils of thy victory make three portions ; the first, for the building of churches and of hospitals ; the second, for the soldiers who have fought under thy orders in this expedition ; and the third, for thyself. When thou shalt have done these things, I, Sovereign Pontiff, will bless thee, and the Lord will be with thee in all thy ways."

Roger swore to do as the Pope desired, and then returned to the ambassadors, whom he had left in his oratory, and informed them that he had obtained the sanction of the Holy

Father, and that in a few days he would commence his expedition against Sicily. Indeed, he could no longer hesitate. The report of the emir had been confirmed by the messengers, and it was now a religious duty for him to proceed in this great undertaking.

With that chivalrous daring which formed so prominent a feature of the Norman character, he lost no time in preparation, but taking El-Themnah as his guide, he crossed the straits of Messina with only three hundred men. This little force landed at Ministri, and thence proceeded towards Messina. At the sight of the invaders, Aly Benaam, who commanded at Messina, collected an army and came forth to meet them. The two bands encountered each other during the night, and the Saracens, unable to resist the superior skill of the Normans, were soon obliged to seek refuge in the city. Roger with his small force did not venture to attack Messina, but contenting himself with ravaging the neighboring country, he returned to Reggio laden with a rich booty.

This first expedition had been for the purpose only of observing the enemy's defences. At Reggio, Robert joined his brother with a considerable force, and two months were spent in preparing for the conquest of the island. When all was ready, the Norman knights, according to the old custom of all the northern nations of Europe, received from the hands of the clergy the consecrated host. Meanwhile the Saracens, informed of the extensive preparations which their enemies were making, stationed a fleet in the straits, so as to prevent them from landing in Sicily. The Norman forces were so inconsiderable when compared with those of the Infidels, that it seemed impossible for them to effect a landing. Roger, however, could not bear any delay, when all was ready for the sacred war which he had undertaken. Dangerous as was the scheme, he determined to cross the straits at night with a small force. In order to effect this, he desired his brother to maintain his forces in battle array, so as to keep the attention of the Saracens fixed on them. Robert, though he admired this bold project, was unwilling to expose his brother to such peril. Roger, however, overcame his objections, and it was decided that this hazardous expedition should be attempted on the following night. What the daring adventurer had anticipated happened. The Sara-

cens, intent on watching the evolutions of the fleet, did not discover the embarkation of Roger, who, with one hundred and seventy men, had landed about two miles from Messina. Without losing time, he hastened towards the city and commenced an attack upon it. The best part of the garrison was absent, employed in the service of the fleet; but the inhabitants prepared to offer a sturdy resistance to the besiegers. Mounted on the walls, they rolled heavy stones on them, and showered on their heads sulphur mixed with pitch and boiling wax, uttering all the while the most horrible shrieks in order to intimidate the assailants. But nothing could overcome the courage and perseverance of the Normans, and Messina was obliged to open its gates to them. Rendered merciless by the sight of twelve noble inhabitants of the place, who had been hanged by order of the governor of the town, the conquerors glutted their vengeance. In the midst of the massacre which ensued, the chroniclers relate that a young Mussulman of noble birth endeavored to escape from the city with his young sister; but the enemy were close upon them, and it soon appeared that escape was hopeless. In despair he seized her in his arms and plunged his sword into her breast, preferring that she should perish by his hand rather than remain in the power of an insolent foe. The taking of Messina, the key to all Sicily, was an event of the utmost importance to the Normans; and Roger immediately despatched a messenger to his brother, to inform him of the success of his arms.

It is not our intention, however, to follow the Normans in this work of conquest, which lasted no less than thirty years. To Roger belongs the principal merit of this great achievement; for although Robert Guiscard took some part in it, he was too much engaged in other undertakings to give all his time and attention to this one object, and it was not until five years after his death that Roger subjected the whole island to his sway. The slow and difficult progress of the Christians in Sicily, was marked by many incidents full of that poetic interest which must necessarily attach to the struggle between two races, which represented in so distinct a manner the most dissimilar forms of civilization and religion. The narrative of a long series of sieges and battles has much the same kind of interest which belongs to a work of fiction. But

the true interest of history lies deeper. The causes and results of historical events, much more than the events themselves, are worthy of the attention of him who studies history aright.

The conquest of Sicily was one act of that great Crusade undertaken during the Middle Ages by the Christian world against Islamism, in which it would seem as if the mild and benign religion of Christ had borrowed the spirit and the arms of its enemies, in order to consummate its triumph. In a barbarous age the sword was the shortest and surest means of effecting a change in the religious creed of a nation. In Sicily, two of the most remarkable races upon the earth met, and during thirty years struggled for supremacy. The one, descended from those mighty heroes whose parentage is lost in the fables of Scandinavian mythology, and who were elevated by their admiring posterity to the rank of divinities, had retained that love of enterprise and adventure which characterized their ancestors, and which, after their conversion to Christianity, made them seek to plant their standard on every shore, and to carry into every region of the earth the light of the new religion. The other proceeded from Arabia, where their prophet, by giving them the same interests and the same laws, and by binding them together in the mighty tie of a common faith, had made them as one people. Obeying passively the precepts of him to whom they owed their existence as a nation, they had come in hordes from their native land to carry on that war of conquest which they considered as one of their most important religious duties. The Normans seemed to carry the spirit of chivalry even to excess, but their bravery was alloyed by characteristic craftiness and ambition. To their enthusiasm, both in war and religion, the most arduous undertakings seemed light and easy. The Saracens, full of religious zeal, hospitable though vindictive, kind to their friends and generous to their enemies, showed the calmness and dogged resolution which mark the true disciples of the Arab prophet. The descendants of Odin, who were now the most staunch and valiant defenders of the Christian faith, had come to Sicily not merely to insure the triumph of their arms over those of the Saracens, but to convert them, and to bring that beautiful island under the sway of the only true Church. Limited in numbers, in



a country of which they had but little knowledge, in the midst of a people who in the hour of danger arose to something of their former greatness, they fought and conquered. The followers of Mahomet awaited their enemy in calm reliance on the protection of their Prophet; they struggled to retain their dominion in Sicily with the same confidence which, more than two hundred years before, they had displayed in conquering it. To them, also, the contest was a holy war; and in their belief, holy wars are the highways by which those who are engaged in them ascend to Paradise. This firm conviction was an obstacle more mighty to the Normans than any material force which the Saracens could bring into the field.

In the history of the conquest of Sicily, we meet with but few conversions from Islamism to Christianity. The most remarkable of these occurred towards the end of the war, in 1086; and perhaps no event during this period struck more dread into the hearts of the Saracens. But three cities remained in the power of the infidels. One of these, Enna, had already, on a former occasion, baffled all the military skill of the Normans. Roger was therefore not disposed to besiege it again, but sending a messenger to Chamut, the chief who commanded the place, and whose wife and children were then prisoners in the Norman camp, he demanded an interview. Chamut consented without hesitation, and accompanied only by a few persons, entered the tent of Count Roger. This prince received him with the respect due to his rank, and entering into conversation with him, drew a picture of the condition of Sicily, where the Christians were everywhere victorious and the Saracens deprived of all their possessions except three cities. He reminded him of the horrors of the siege of Syracuse, during which thousands had perished by famine; and he predicted that such would be the fate of Enna if it did not surrender immediately. Chamut was deeply impressed by the representations which were made by the Norman, and he was finally induced to promise that he would surrender the city.

In order to escape the anger of his countrymen, Chamut agreed with the Count that he would allow himself to be taken in an ambush. Accordingly, on the appointed day, the Saracen chief left Enna with all his treasures and a large

retinue, under the pretence of visiting the neighboring towns and fortresses. When he had reached a narrow passage in the mountains, the Normans surrounded the train, and all were made prisoners. The troops of Roger then hastened to the city, which was taken by surprise, and filled with consternation on hearing of the capture of Chamut, on whose prudence and valor the inhabitants had relied ; it was soon forced to surrender. As soon as Roger returned to his camp he had an interview with Chamut, who appeared before him with a grave and dignified bearing. "If I have done this," said he, "it is not, you well know, for the hope of recompense, but because your voice penetrated my heart in spite of myself. This unknown religion, which brought you into the island where for two hundred years we reigned without a rival, must be great and powerful, since it has done for you what the great Mahomet, whose armies covered our island, could not do for us. The God who leads you has made you strong and victorious ; the Prophet has left us powerless and in chains. You have raised your altars which had been destroyed ; ours have been humbled in the dust. Mahomet is no longer the great Prophet. The great Prophet is he whom you adore on your knees. We come, I, with my wife and my children, in order that he may receive us and give us his blessing." The Count joyfully received the new convert, and on the following day Chamut and all his family were solemnly baptized.

Two years after this conversion, which filled the hearts of the Saracens with gloom, the last strong-hold of Islamism on the island, the city of Noto, surrendered to the victorious arms of Count Roger. Thus was completed the conquest of Sicily. Less than a hundred years had elapsed since forty Norman knights, returning from Palestine, had landed in Italy ; and now, two of the finest provinces of Italy, Apulia and Calabria, as well as the island of Sicily, were ruled by Norman princes. Nor had the conquest of these rich provinces been their only exploits in Southern Europe. While his brother was engaged in the conquest of Sicily, Robert Guiscard had carried his arms into the heart of the Eastern empire itself, in the hope of establishing a new dynasty on the throne of Constantinople. In this enterprise he might perhaps have succeeded, had he not been called back to

Apulia, where his absence had given rise to serious disturbances. The Norman arms had thus acquired a well-deserved renown throughout Europe. Let us now see how they profited by their conquests.

Sicily was conquered, but the greatest work still remained to be done. Count Roger knew well, that the thirty years of hardships and privations which he had undergone during the conquest of the island were as nothing when compared with the difficulties that he would have to encounter in his attempt to establish a permanent and well-organized government in a country which had been for so long a period distracted by domestic and foreign warfare. To unite under one sovereign the many discordant elements which were in the population, to check the insubordination and haughtiness of his followers, and at the same time to repress the efforts of the Saracens to reconquer their lost dominion, was the arduous undertaking which still remained for the victor. He commenced this great work with the same resolute spirit which had carried him triumphantly through the war.

His first thought was to reorganize the Church. A part of the native population had continued to profess the Christian religion. During the first years which followed the establishment of the Saracen dominion, they had borne with patience the tortures to which they had been subjected ; but as the severity of their conquerors relaxed, their belief grew lukewarm, and many deserted the church of their fathers. Contempt and indifference, which allow men to sink into apathy, are far more powerful to temper the ardor of religious zeal and to overthrow a faith, than direct persecution, which calls forth all their courage and powers of endurance. The Christians of Sicily found that they had become the outcasts of the population. They were confined to the meanest quarters of the cities, or obliged to seek a refuge in some church or monastery, where they might escape the mockery of the Saracens. Their resources were limited, as it was difficult to exercise any profession by which they might gain a livelihood. They were obliged to perform the sacred rites of their faith in secret, and it was with difficulty that the clergy could bring together around the altar those who still professed the religion of Christ, and who were dispersed throughout the island. Most of these Christians worshipped

according to the Greek ritual, which was a serious obstacle to Count Roger's endeavors to reorganize the Church. He was obliged, after he had caused magnificent cathedrals to be erected in the principal cities, to invest with the highest ecclesiastical dignities those monks who had acquired the greatest reputation in the monasteries of Calabria. Bishoprics were founded at Catania, Girgenti, Mazara, Syracuse, and other cities, which were filled by him, the appointments being confirmed by the Pope. A few years after the conquest, he was invested with the authority of sole legate of Sicily, by Pope Urban II. In the bull, which conferred on Roger this important dignity, the Pope says:—"Full of confidence in your religious faith, we confirm by the authority of this document what we had already promised you by words; that is to say, during your lifetime and that of your son Simon, or whosoever may be your legitimate heir, we will never send into your dominions any legate of the Roman Church without your consent and approbation."

This new honor conferred on Count Roger was not an empty one. At a time when the Church was one of the widest fields for the display of worldly ambition, when the papacy, owing to the efforts of Gregory VII., had acquired new and extraordinary power, when excommunication was the fearful weapon held over the head of every disobedient son of the Church, the authority of the legate was of no small importance. It not only gave Roger the power to name such persons as he chose to the highest ecclesiastical dignities, but it enabled him to give the final sentence in all cases that came before the ecclesiastical courts, which must otherwise have been pronounced at Rome. This was the foundation of the tribunal afterwards known in Sicily as the "Tribunal of the Monarchy."

In the organization of his government, the most serious obstacle which the Great Count—such was the title which Roger took after the conquest—had to encounter, was the variety of races that formed the population. To bring men differing in religion, language, manners, and customs, to submit to one system and authority, is a task that has often perplexed the lawgiver. At the time of the conquest, Sicily was divided into three provinces, the Val di Noto, the Val di Demona, and the Val di Mazara. The population was

composed of Saracens, Greeks, and all those known by the common name of Latins, among whom were counted the natives, the Franks, and the Lombards. There were also many Jews, who settled in Sicily in the time of the Roman dominion, and had continued there under the Saracens. This population was scattered over the whole island. The Greeks, however, were chiefly in the northern part of Sicily, the Saracens in that which faced Africa, and the Lombards in the interior.

Count Roger avoided an error which many conquerors have committed; he did not attempt to impose upon these different races the same laws. He understood that the triumph of civilization is insured not by forcing all men to conform to one standard, but by developing the peculiar characteristics of every nation. He therefore allowed these races to govern themselves by the laws which they had been accustomed to obey. Each of them was allowed to retain its own religion. Even the Jews, towards whom the Christians of that age showed such contempt and hatred, were not excepted. They enjoyed civil and religious liberty; they were allowed to preach and to profess publicly their faith, and to hold land on condition of paying an annual tribute, which they had been long accustomed to pay to their Saracen rulers. The Greeks and the natives continued to be ruled by the Justinian Code; the Lombards followed their national laws; the Koran continued to be the sacred law-book of the Saracens; and the Normans themselves retained the Frank legislation. Neither was any attempt made, as has been done in more recent times, to destroy the language of these different races. Three languages were in common use throughout the island, and all public acts were drawn up in Greek, Latin, and Arabic.

The Normans brought with them into Sicily the feudal system. Some writers have maintained that this system already prevailed in that country; but it is now generally admitted, that nothing which can properly bear that name was known before the conquest. Faithful to his promise to the Pope, who had encouraged his first expedition into Sicily, Roger divided the lands between the clergy and those of his followers who had most distinguished themselves, reserving for himself a considerable portion. Homage and the oath of

allegiance were the basis of all the acts of donation. Even the Count himself was only a feudatory of the Duke of Apulia. The clergy were most generously treated in this division of lands, which they held, like the lay barons, as feudatories of the Count. But they enjoyed many privileges which the laymen did not. They were not obliged to render military service, and were relieved from nearly all the active obligations to which the laymen were subjected. Roger was too prudent, however, to free the clergy from all restraint. He maintained certain forms by which they were reminded of the homage which they owed the prince.

Count Roger survived but three years the conquest of Sicily. In the month of July, 1101, he died at Mileto, in Calabria, and was buried in the Church of the Holy Trinity, which he had founded and richly endowed. On his tomb, were inscribed the following lines : —

Linquens terrenas, migravit Dux ad amœnas  
Rogerius sedes, nam cœli detinet ædes.  
Obiit M. C. I.

The Baron de Bazancourt thus speaks of this great prince.

“History, which records the past, and posterity, which judges it, must render just praise to the eminent qualities of Roger. In him the courage of the warrior and the prudence of the veteran leader were always allied with the most noble and elevated sentiments. His career, so brilliant and successful, the astonishment, nay, the terror, which he excited in whole nations and empires, never rendered him blind to his own faults or unjust towards others. In order to establish his young dominion and consolidate his conquest, he did not resort to oppression ; he did not attempt to beat down the obstacles which were constantly rising around him with the iron arm of a conqueror ; he preferred to overcome them by his wisdom, or to avert them by his prudence. At a warlike period, when the weak were oppressed by the strong, and no one recognized any law but that of the sword, Count Roger respected the rights of individuals, and acquired power by mildness and justice rather than by brute force. He adopted only what was great and heroic in his age, and anticipated the future, as it were, by his penetration and sagacity.”

The Great Count left two sons, Simon and Roger, both children at the time of his death. Adelaide, his widow, feeling that she alone could not govern the country during their minority, invited to her court Robert, son of the Duke

of Burgundy and grandson of the king of France, and giving him her daughter in marriage, entrusted to his hands the government. Simon did not long survive his father; and, in 1112, the sudden death of Robert, which was attributed to poison, left Roger II. sole master of the island. In his internal policy he showed much the same spirit as his father, and his love of adventure and conquest was no less strong. He was not content with the possessions or the title which his father had left, but determined to unite the provinces of Apulia and Calabria under his sway, and to obtain a crown. The condition of Southern Italy, under the feeble successors of Robert Guiscard, Roger and William, favored this scheme; and when, on the death of the latter in 1127, he crossed the straits, and presented himself to demand homage from the barons of Apulia as the legitimate successor of William, it was not long before the whole of that province submitted to his sway.

From Rome, Roger II. met with an opposition which he had not anticipated. He had hoped that the services which the Normans had rendered to the Papal See, the assistance which Robert Guiscard had afforded the Popes in their struggle with the German Emperors, would have bound their successors to his family by ties of gratitude. It was not so, however; and Pope Honorius II., alarmed at the growing power of Roger, threatened him with excommunication if he did not immediately yield up Apulia to the sovereignty of the Holy See. In vain did Roger send ambassadors with the most magnificent presents to the Pope, entreating him to grant the investiture of the duchy. Honorius remained inflexible, and the Normans, finding that all other means were useless, declared war on the Pope. The contest was carried on with great activity; but Honorius, finding that he could place but little reliance on those who had agreed to espouse his cause, sent secretly a messenger to Roger promising him the investiture. An interview took place at Benevento, and the Duke was confirmed in his sovereignty over Calabria and Apulia.

The first of his wishes was thus realized. To his title of Great Count of Sicily, he had added that of Duke of Calabria and Apulia. He was now the richest sovereign in Europe, and in power was inferior to none. The kings of England and France alone could boast of more

extensive territories. The capital of Sicily was filled with splendid edifices, and the magnificence displayed at the court of the prince was exceeded by few sovereigns. The sciences and the arts flourished under his generous protection, and under his firm government the people were prosperous and contented. Yet Roger was not satisfied ; the title of king was yet wanting to give a new sanction to his conquests, and his most ardent wish was to found a monarchy in Sicily.

He did not conceal this ambition ; and a large number of his barons, who were now in so dependent a position that the only mode of increasing their own power and influence was to augment the authority of their sovereign, assembled and offered him the crown. Without giving any definite answer to these Sicilian barons before he had made sure of his subjects in Calabria and Apulia, the Duke left the island and repaired to Salerno, where he assembled the clergy and those of the barons whom he knew to be personally attached to him. Having informed them of the wish of the Sicilians, he asked their counsel. His speech was enthusiastically received, and it was agreed that the ancient kingdom of Sicily should be reëstablished. Nothing was now wanting but the sanction of the Pope.

At the death of Honorius II. two parties had arisen in the sacred college. The one had elected Gregory, cardinal-deacon of St. Angelo, to the dignity of Pope, under the title of Innocent II. ; the other had conferred this honor on Peter, a cardinal, under the name of Anacletus. Roger declared himself for Anacletus, who gave his sanction to the new dignity of the Duke. The ceremony of the coronation was performed at Palermo, on Christmas day, in the year 1130. Alexander Telesinus, in his Chronicle of this period, dwells with delight on the magnificence and pomp displayed on this occasion. "No words," says the chronicler, "can express, nor can the mind imagine, how immense was the glory of the prince at that moment ; how great he was in the midst of his regal splendor, how admirable when surrounded by all the magnificence of the coronation. The dazzled multitude thought it saw all the riches of the world united in the person of the new king ; it seemed as if the city itself were crowned, and as if nothing but joy and delight reigned there."

Thus were all the hopes of the Great Count realized, and



the son of the Norman adventurer, who had gone to Italy in quest of adventures wherein to display his valor, was raised to the rank of sovereign of one of the finest and richest kingdoms in Europe. He was succeeded by his son William, who from his vices was called the Bad. Then his grandson ascended the throne, and in contradistinction to the first William, received the title of the Good. This prince was the last of the legitimate male descendants of Tancred of Hauteville; and at his death, Constantia, his aunt, who had married the Emperor Henry VI., son of Frederic Barbarossa, claimed the throne for her husband. Henry himself crossed the Alps to maintain his rights, and after a brief struggle with Tancred, the illegitimate grandson of Roger II., the throne of Sicily passed from the family of Hauteville to that of Hohenstauffen in the year 1204.

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ART. III. — *Twenty-four Years in the Argentine Republic.*

By Col. J. ANTHONY KING, an Officer in the Army of the Republic. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1846. 8vo. pp. 324.

THE copious title-page of Colonel King's, or rather of Mr. Whitney's, book would lead one to expect from it a full and satisfactory answer to all the inquiries he might make respecting the provinces on the river Plata. It purports to be a "narrative of a residence during twenty-four years in the Argentine Republic, embracing its civil and military history, and an account of its political condition before and during the administration of Governor Rosas, his course of policy, the causes and character of his interference with the government of Montevideo, and the circumstances which led to the interposition of England and France." These bountiful promises introduce nothing more than a disjointed detail of events from the pen of Mr. Whitney, whose office, it appears, has been to work up, from a verbal outline of facts given by Colonel King, a readable and salable narrative of this adventurer's stirring life.

The hero figures, first, as a runaway cabin-boy from New